

## **12 November 2018 - O.R. Tambo International Airport Response to Snake refusal at security checkpoint**

Flying with small children can be challenging and stressful. Management of O. R. Tambo International Airport very much appreciates that this encounter with security procedures upset both Ms Nicole Fritz and her child.

It is regrettable that the detail and application of globally adopted security procedures in recent years has had to get to such a level of detail that even children's toys are affected. However, the actions of security staff were in line with what they are trained and expected to do. It is important to note that given current global aviation threats, the execution of aviation safety, needs to always err on the side of caution.

We hope that some background and rationale will help establish how and why these security measures were adopted.

Aviation security requires ongoing and significant attention. At O.R. Tambo International Airport we apply all international aviation laws. In this regard, the most important regulatory function of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is the formulation and adoption of Standards and Recommended Practices for civil aviation. These are incorporated into 19 technical annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, also known as the Chicago Convention.

These provisions extend beyond preventing criminal or terrorist acts to include addressing things that could affect the responses and behaviour of passengers. This naturally includes toy weapons, but also other items that have been deemed to have the potential to cause adverse reactions by passengers during a flight.

Airport management can appreciate that, on the face of it, this sort of regulation may seem to a lay person to be unnecessary. However, we remain obliged to apply the regulations and we try to do this in a consistent manner.

Given that the toy snake was not going to be permitted through the security checkpoint, efforts were made to help Ms Fritz to check it in as hold luggage. Unfortunately, that particular flight had closed its check-in facility by the time that the security officers had queried this as an option with the airline.

At O.R. Tambo International Airport, we pride ourselves on providing safe and seamless processing through our airport. An incident such as this highlights that work still needs to be done to further educate our passengers about aviation safety and security.

ENDS

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